

REMARKS

The claims were amended by Examiner's Amendment to place them in allowable condition. Applicant requests a slight revision of this language.

With respect to claims 1, 16, 17 and 18, the Examiner's Amendment changed the claim language to read:

.... sintering or melting the doped SiO₂ granules in a reducing atmosphere so as to form the blank of doped quartz glass, **including wherein said sintering includes** a gas pressure sintering

The present amendment does not really vary the intended meaning of the allowed claims. It simply deletes the disjunctive phrase "or melting" so that the original grammatical structure of the claim is preserved, i.e.:

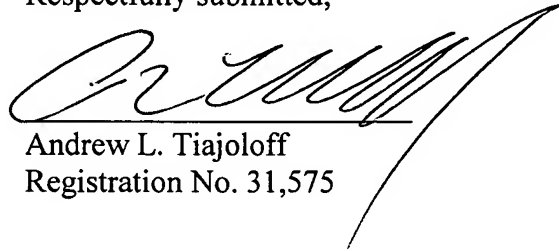
.... sintering [~~or melting~~] the doped SiO₂ granules in a reducing atmosphere so as to form the blank of doped quartz glass, **including wherein said sintering includes** a gas pressure sintering

Attorney for applicant alerted the Examiner to this syntax aspect of the amendment by email in further proposed claim language before allowance, but the earlier-suggested claim language was incorporated in the Examiner's Amendment.

With respect to claims 16, 17 and 18, the term "said SiO₂ blank" is changed to just "said blank", which has clearer antecedent basis in the preceding claim language, which refers to "the blank of doped quartz glass".

Entry of the foregoing amendments is respectfully requested. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone attorney for applicants at 212-490-3285.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew L. Tiajolloff", is written over a horizontal line.

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